



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
District of Kansas

NEWS RELEASE

Eric Melgren, U.S. Attorney

Contact: Kena Rice

(316) 269-6481

Headquarters
1200 Epic Center
301 N. Main
Wichita, Kansas 67202
(316)269-6481
FAX (316)269-6484

Topeka Office
444 Quincy
Topeka, Kansas 66683

Kansas City Office
500 State Avenue
Suite 360
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

News releases are available at www.usdoj.gov/usao/ks/

June 18, 2004

GRAND JURY RETURNS INDICTMENTS

Topeka, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that four individuals were indicted on June 16, 2004, by a federal grand jury in Topeka, Kansas. Those indicted include:

- **John Patrick Hargis**, 33, Oskaloosa, Kansas, currently in custody, is charged with three counts of being a felon in possession of a firearm on October 4, 2003 and November 7, 2003; one count of making a false written statement on November 7, 2003, to “The Pawn Market” to obtain a firearm; and one count of being a felon in possession of ammunition on January 9, 2004, in Jefferson County, Kansas.

If convicted, Hargis faces a maximum of ten years in federal prison without parole on each count. The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Greg Hough.

- **McAllister Edward Bryce**, 24, and **William Joseph Lapuzza**, 22, both from Topeka, Kansas, each currently in custody, are each charged with one count of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute 50 grams or more (1.76 ounces or more) of methamphetamine from June 6 through June 9, 2004; one count of possession with the intent to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine on June 9, 2004; two counts of possessing a firearm in relation to a drug trafficking crime on June 9, 2004; and one count of forfeiture of \$48,710 in cash resulting from the charged offenses, all in Shawnee County, Kansas.

If convicted, each face a minimum of ten years and a maximum of life for conspiracy and possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine and a minimum of five years for

–MORE–

each count of possessing a firearm in relation to a drug trafficking crime. Bryce and Lapuzza are each scheduled to make their initial appearance in U.S. District Court in Topeka on June 22, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. The case was investigated by the Kansas Highway Patrol and the Drug Enforcement Administration and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Greg Hough.

- **Jorge Humberto Pineda**, 30, Sun Valley, California, currently in custody, is charged with one count of possession with the intent to distribute approximately 242 grams (approximately 8 ounces) of methamphetamine on May 24, 2004, in Russell County, Kansas.

If convicted, Pineda faces a minimum of ten years and a maximum of life in federal prison without parole. The case was investigated by the Russell County Sheriff's Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony Mattivi.

As in any criminal case, a person is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The Indictments filed merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.